

GreenInk



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Air

Happiness is wind in your sails

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THE TRUE PRICE OF CLIMATE CHANGE

The role of money in (western) societies has long proven to be essential. Everything has a price tag, even things that are hard to monetize like services. Still, costs do not include a products or production process' consequences for the earth, animals, and people in most cases [11]. And that's strange considering this world is so focused on economic development. Combatting climate change could logically be much faster and efficient if people knew the true prices of their actions, right? Well, that's easier said than done. How do you put a price on climate change?

CALCULATION EXAMPLE: LET'S HAVE A PASTA PARTY!

Let's take an easier example to begin with: pasta. If you are cooking for a big group of people and you want them all to contribute to the costs, you can calculate the amount as follows: take all the ingredients you put in your pasta, add their costs, and divide that number by the number of people (figure 1) [2]. Cheap pasta party ensured! Although...



1/2 lb	prime pork	.75
1	yellow onion	.28
2	cloves	.16
1	garlic	.09
1	olive oil	.59
1	dried tomatoes	.05
1	dried sausage	.05
1	dried basil	.02
1	red pepper	.02
1	salt	.03
1	pepper	.03
2	tomato paste	.08
2	cream cheese	.20
1	parmesan	.51
1	spinach	.65
total		\$2.28
4 servings		÷ 4
per serving		0.82

Figure 1 - Example of how to calculate pasta prices per person.

TRUE PRICES

Prices of food and other goods generally do not cover the societal and environmental impact of the production chain [11]. But that can change! True Price,

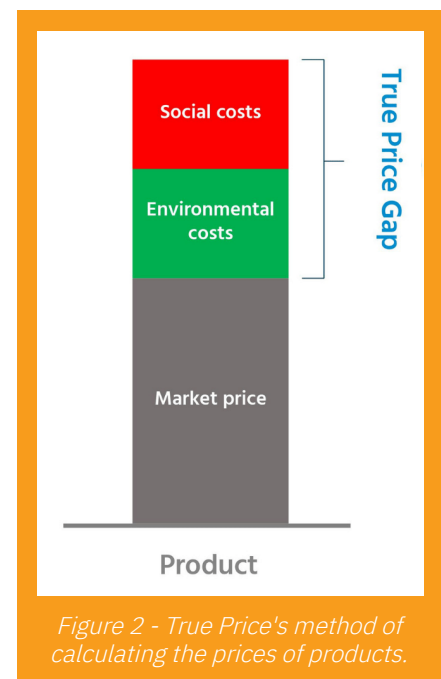
for example, works on embedding the social and environmental costs in the prices of goods, and so calculating the “true price” (figure 2) [8]. The new price usually only differs slightly from the old one, possibly making it easier for people to accept this price change. A well-known example of a company working with True Price is Tony Chocolonely. On top of that, WWF and TMG have developed a True Cost Accounting (TCA) tool to shape food policies and steer it towards more health, justice & sustainability [10].

On a more critical note, one could ask themselves whether the “true price” as calculated by True Price really covers the full picture. There might also be other indirect costs attached to products, like soil degradation or injuries related to labour. Besides, how are “social & environmental costs” defined? True Price is not very clear about that. Still, I believe this company can really make a difference in the world, as long as we let it or even help it a little.

Now, let's look at the bigger picture.

CLIMATE CHANGE & NATURAL DISASTERS

Where does climate change start and where does it end? There is no clear, definite answer for that question, but we can start by defining what part of climate change can be monetized. To do so, this concept should be broken down into



smaller, easier understandable pieces. Climate change induced weather events, for example, are onetime weather events that are a direct consequence of the warming of our planet. But where do we draw the line? Weather events are also just a natural occurrence. According to the IPCC Sixth Assessment Report, extreme weather events, like heavy rainfall and heatwaves, increase in frequency and intensity as a consequence of climate change [3]. These weather events disproportionately impact the lives of people contributing the least to climate change. Therefore, the damage done by those extreme weather events should be turned into an economic value. That could make it easier for people to understand the severity of the situation and even of their own actions, but it can also straighten the skewed situation.

FROM ECOLOGICAL TO ECONOMIC VALUE

A striking example of such a climate change induced extreme weather event is the flooding of roughly a third of the country in Pakistan in the summer of 2022. This has received a lot of media attention as the country has demanded

western societies to pay for the damage [5]. It believes that the extreme rain causing the flooding was in its turn a result of climate change, largely contributed to by “The West”. This is based on the scientific evidence reported by the IPCC stating that “the most vulnerable people and systems are observed to be disproportionately affected” [3], amongst which Pakistan is perceived to be vulnerable. It was argued that this event could not directly be linked to climate change, but the projections in the IPCC report show that heavy monsoons are indeed part of a changing climate & future [3] & [5].

The estimation of economic damage reached values between 10 and 100 billion dollars. It was set by Pakistan at \$15 billion, of which about half (\$8 billion) is said to be paid by western countries [5] & [7]. It should, however, be noted that these numbers remain estimates and that a lot of sources mention different values, probably as a result of a focus on different aspects. It thus is important to understand what these prices are based on. Take the Post Disaster Needs Assessment (PDNA) set up right after the flooding event in Pakistan [6]. The calculation provided in this report is mainly based on and divided into damage, loss and needs, per region as well as per sector (figure 3). It looks like only the environmental aspects linked to human society, like agriculture, are included, while a loss in nature seems to be left out.

Climate change impacts therefore stretch beyond the part we can monetize. And this can create problems. For the people most affected - in the sense that they are not compensated for the damages caused by the emitting part of the world - and for the people who want to change - they do not comprehend the

situation as in depth as needed. Without insight it is hard to change the problem and it will only get worse, even though everyone in the world would be willing to change.

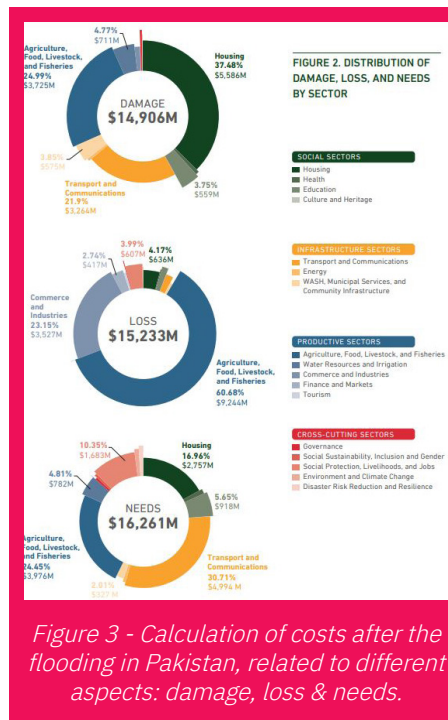


Figure 3 - Calculation of costs after the flooding in Pakistan, related to different aspects: damage, loss & needs.

VISUALISATION OF NUMBERS

It is probably hard to understand most numbers when it comes to costs. Let's assume a situation in which society as it is now can live on without having the Earth as a base. Or put differently: we all move to a planet that isn't giving us the resources Earth provides. We could try to visualize what happens then: companies depending on the Earth and everything it brings will start to fall apart. Monsanto, Shell, and Apple would most likely go bankrupt as their sources do not exist anymore, as would many more multinationals. If we would add their company value and correct that for how much they contribute to the total greenhouse gas emissions by humans, we can get a sense of how much damaging the Earth costs. It is a fact that only 100

companies make up 71% of GHG emissions in the world that lead to a changing climate [1]. Let's do a quick calculation: China Coal - the leader of the big polluters - has a net worth of \$10.74 billion [4] and is responsible for 14,3% [1] of GHG emissions. If we would all be acting like this company, it would cost us about \$75.1 billion, as well as our Earth. Are we really willing to pay that price?

This is of course a rather abstract manner of pricing climate change, without a relevant outcome, but it shows the magnitude of costs we are dealing with. Another (more scientifically sound) method is to determine the social cost of carbon as described by the University College London [9]. They have estimated that 1 tonne of CO₂ can cost over \$3000.

On a more personal level, we could try to calculate the costs of the products people use on a daily basis. All products in essence come from resources the Earth gives us. Thus, the costs per usage can give an idea of how much we spend on climate change. According to Dr Brierly, individuals' emissions can cost humanity \$1300 annually, or even \$15000 if the effects of climate change on economic growth are considered [9].

LET'S COMMUNICATE!

Now that the costs of climate change have been calculated (although very roughly), it is time to think about how these results can be communicated to the public, especially what we would want people to do with this kind of information. Therefore, I would ask people reading this article to think about your actions and what costs they bring about and realize that paying a little more could eventually result in a happier planet. Almost every cost can be brought back to where it all begins: Earth. 🌍

DISCLAIMER

This article was written by a bachelor student Environmental Sciences, without expertise in finance, in a relatively short timeframe and might thus not cover the whole issue / picture.

Do you ever feel like everything in your life just goes wrong, no matter what you're doing? It never really resembles the perfect peaceful lives sketched in films and series. Obviously, because films and series can be steered in the direction of love for example (or any other desired goal). In real-life, this is a lot harder.

There are a lot of factors that determine if your day is a good or a bad one. Nice weather, lovely people, delicious cake and hot drinks, a successful travel, a good grade, a bargain, unsuspected kindness, traffic lights turning green, a delivery that came sooner, a delicious meal that turns out to be very healthy too, an easy mathematics assignment (that you actually can handle for a change), winning a game of cards. All of these little things can bring joy into your life. But why doesn't it always feel that way then? Well, that's a bit hard to say, but it can be concluded that every situation is different and every person reacts in another way. Therefore, we need to focus on the little, stable things in life that make it so much lighter.

TRY TO UNDERSTAND PEOPLE & SYMPATHISE WITH THEM

I know it's really really hard to understand someone who's yelling at you for something you are not guilty of, but at least trying to understand the person's background can do a lot for your mood. There might be some sort of reasoning behind someone's behaviour or maybe certain circumstances that can cause this person to react a certain way. So, if someone is tough on you, try to think of a reason why that might be. Maybe this person just has a bad day (like everyone does once in a while) or maybe they just heard bad news about someone they love or maybe he has been bullied for all his life and has learned that his behaviour the way it is is expected from you because he doesn't know differently. Let's take a pushy driver that

passes you impatiently on the highway. Your first thought might be: 'what an asshole!', but if you knew he was driving this way because his wife is giving birth in the hospital (which he obviously does not want to miss) you would think differently, wouldn't you?

I assure you, your life can be a lot easier if you try to sympathise with others, even if you do not know anything about them. Just think of a reason for their behaviour yourself and it will all fall into place. You just turned one negative into a positive!

EVERY DAY A CELEBRATION

Sometimes all it takes is just a warm cup of your favourite tea. Such small things can do more for your mood than you think. Turn each day into a tiny celebration simply by allowing (or even better: rewarding) yourself to enjoy a hot coco, goood coffee, a steaming hot cup of tea or maybe a slice of your favourite cake, a delicious cookie or something else that just makes your life a little bit better. It doesn't matter what it is, just make sure that you enjoy it the fullest :)

GIVE LITTLE COMPLIMENTS

Spreading a little love each day will not only make your life more positive, but it will also better the lives of others. Simply saying someone has done a great job can make this person happy and can make you feel like you did something good that day. The same can be achieved when you help someone by telling them they dropped something. But there are many more situations in which this is valid!

THINK ABOUT 3 GOOD THINGS

This last point is inspired by the book 'Zen: The art of simple living', in which the writer gives advice on how your life can become more zen. In one of the chapters, he tells you to think of 3 things you're grateful for every night before you go to bed. Now, this might feel a bit childish but it could actually influence the way you feel quite a bit! Try thinking of positive things each day and let them balance the negatives. Naturally, not every situation can be turned positive, but at least it can become less negative by just finding a balance (that tends to lean towards the positive :)).

Of course, I cannot guarantee that your life will be better after reading this article but I can assure you that some situations might appear lighter and less intense than it would if you wouldn't use my tips. Just try it out, it never hurts! 🌍



LET'S STOP ANIMAL TESTING



text NIAMH BOSCH

We all use cosmetics. Whether it is just shampoo once a week or an entire 20-step beauty routine every single day. And we know what we like to use and what we absolutely hate. Or we just don't care and buy the cheapest option. But there's a catch behind these products. Many of them are selling themselves like they're all good and no harm is done, but nothing could be further from the truth. Animal cruelty is just around the corner. In fact, it is already in our homes without us even noticing. Do you feel terrible now? Great. That was exactly the point. Now, let's dive into this problem.



Let's start with what we understand under 'animal testing'. For ages now, humans have been using animals to perform research on and test their cosmetics, with the goal of assessing a product's health and safety effects.³ Such procedures always cause a lot of suffering. Imagine putting unknown chemicals, usually irritants, on your body and wait for what happens, that's not pretty... It can cause rashes, burns and what not. And that's exactly what happens, even involuntarily, to animals. But that's not all, animals often experience psychological distress on top of the physical pain.³ And that is awful. To be honest, I can't even look at those horrible pictures of harmed animals in need of help. But if you really wanna know, I suggest you Google it yourself.

Luckily, the crookedness of this industry is more and more acknowledged nowadays.¹ Animal welfare concerns are being brought up (I mean, duh!), as well as ethical issues and the added value of animal testing for human reactions. People often argue that animals are significantly different to humans and therefore test results are not compatible with human reactions. These are even



being mimicked through artificially creating symptoms in animals, of which the limitations and the horrible

consequences aren't hard to imagine.³ Besides, it is proven that as much as 90% of products tested on animals fail and don't even make it outside of the laboratory.¹ That means extra suffering for absolutely nothing. End this please!

Let's turn to the positive info now. In 2004, 2009 and 2013 bans have been implemented in the EU, which is why animal testing is now entirely prohibited in the EU!⁴ But to burry you in bad news again, this doesn't count for countries elsewhere in the world. And so, we still end up buying products that are tested on animals as they originate from American or Chinese organizations for example...



I think this amazingly powerful quote by Mahatma Gandhi says it all: **"The greatness of a nation and its moral progress can be judged by the way its animals are treated."**

After having seen these photos and read the statistics (whereof there is much more online), you wish you never had agreed on using products for which such harm is done. But I get it, you didn't know. So, what can we do differently now we do know? Well, here's a list to start with:

SUPPORT ANIMAL RIGHTS ORGANIZATIONS. Join and sign petitions by World Wildlife Fund (WWF), World Ani-

mal Protection, Peta and Humane Society International (HIS), to name a few. Visit the Wikipedia List of animal welfare organizations for more!

ONLY BUY CRUELTY FREE. Can't find a label? Check the brand status on one of the following sites: List of Cruelty Free Brands⁵, Dutch "Dierproefvrije Cosmeticalijst"⁶, and PETA's Global Beauty Without Bunnies Shopping Guide⁷.

BROADEN YOUR KNOWLEDGE. If you didn't know about this problem before, it might be useful to look up more information until you feel educated enough to make the right decision, the next time you're in a cosmetics store.



SPREAD YOUR KNOWLEDGE. There are still so many people unaware of the harm their favorite products do to all kinds of animals behind the scenes. Let them know that their choice matters.

THINK ABOUT RELATED PROBLEMS. Animal testing is not the only hidden practice on Earth involving people hurting animals. Browse through the website of World Animal Protection and find out what else you can do to fight animal cruelty around the globe!

BECOME A VEGAN. Or at least a vegetarian, the animal industry also causes a lot of suffering.



And of course, I can go on and on about this topic and there are way more statistics and advices available if you look for it. I suggest you do that yourself now that you know the basics. Good luck you animal warrior! 🐰



For more information please visit the sites mentioned in this article. Find them on page 23.

My name is Iris. I am 24 years old. I grew up in a village near Maastricht, south of the Netherlands. I live in Pomona, a quiet place with five international girls in Wageningen.

When did you study, and what specifically?

I started my BES programme in 2015 and then continued in MES. I specialised in Environmental System Analysis in both programmes. I first did an internship at Meuillel Centraal, a Dutch company, then went to Gotenburg for half a year. Then, I did my thesis in Spain. I wanted to learn Spanish and combine it with the thesis abroad to get some experience. I connected with a sustainable land management group in Wageningen, which has contact with CSIC (Spanish National Research Council) within the Institute for Sustainable Agriculture (IAS). I tried to combine their work with Environmental System Analysis. I focused on the policy dimension of sustainable land management. I planned to start a thesis about soil erosion for a company there. In Spain, they have a lot of olive and orange orchards. After attending a 3-week Spanish course, I got the basic knowledge of Spanish, but the pandemic happened. After one month, I came back. During that time, I conducted interviews online, where I learned a lot of Spanish. I tried to make the summary of my reports in Spanish. Here is a tip: If you want to learn a language, go abroad for a thesis or an internship!

Did you have any lovely memories when you were an Aktief Slip member?

Yes! GreenInk gives me the best memories. I am super proud of it, and I am happy that it is still alive. I was also part of Akcie. We organised one of the biggest and amazing events on campus called “mole”. We did different games on campus to find out who was the “mole”. There was a lot of organisational work, but we learned a lot by planning everything as a team. With six members, the committee is still having dinner together!

You are working at AbelTalent. What company is this?

AbelTalent is a combination of a consulting firm and a sub-contracting company. It is a temporary employment agency. For example, you start working there for three months to one year. It aims to give you more experience in the field by subcontracting you to one of their clients. Their projects are related to the physical environments, such as soil, water, mobility and infrastructure. AbelTalent has clients such as municipalities, NGOs and commercial companies. I am now doing a project with Bureau Veritas, a company that certifies ships. I did not think it was related to me. That is why I

like AbelTalent: it has projects from non-profit organisations and the commercial sector. I am doing two kinds of tasks. I mostly start organising data for companies. Our world is becoming more digitalised. Companies need to get their physical data in the system. We are working with soil researchers. For instance, if you want to buy a house, you need to dig in the ground to plant a tree. You need permission to see what is underground. The municipality needs to use the soil information system to retrieve the data to discover pollution and remediate the soil. Another part is consultancy. You advise organisations to make processes more optimal. It is related to sustainability because optimising processes make a business more efficient, meaning fewer people, money, and energy. I interview people to help to visualise the current business situation. Subsequently, I propose a future business situation by developing a protocol to instruct employees on making something digital. You would realise that every company has a different way of operation. Our work at AbelTalent aims to make the company more organised.

How is AbelTalent relevant to environmental sciences students?

After graduating in November, I noticed that it was hard even to receive an interview. I was only selected two times to join an interview; both did not get me a position. In total, I applied for 10+ vacancies. It was hard to get accepted, possibly because of the pandemic. Then I found AbelTalent on LinkedIn. They offered me soil training to see if we were a match. It was nice that they saw potential in me. They help graduates in getting experience when companies struggle to organise recruitment. It was a win-win situation. It can be challenging to adapt to a 40-hour workweek immediately. At AbelTalent, I worked 32 hours right now. AbelTalent can be an excellent starting point for your career. You work for an organisation recommended by AbelTalent. After one year, you might get a fixed contract from that organisation. If it does not hire you, you can stay at AbelTalent and continue looking for a new company. You always get a stable income.

It seems like your need to be an expert on soil science. Is it hard for major A and major C people to be selected?

No, if you don't have deep knowledge of soil, it is not a problem. You are chosen based on your “CCSI profile”, which stands for ‘communication’, ‘commercial’, ‘social’, ‘initiative’. Environmental scientists are the people who bridge technological solutions and communication,



P O S T C A R D

F R O M A F O R M E R A K T I E F S L I P P E R

Kind regards,

Iris Flamand

which are advantageous. They seek people who can analyse a problem and solve it. You can even bring your project to the company. I would advise students to look at AbelTalent's LinkedIn page and see if they like it.

Is there a lot of competition so far?

Not really. During the pandemic, AbelTalent reduced its company size. We are now with 30 people. We are open to people right now because there are more clients as the pandemic is coming to an end.

What tips would you give to students who are looking for a job in the environmental field?

LinkedIn is your friend. Make a LinkedIn profile. The most difficult thing for me was to find the right keywords. Once you find a suitable vacancy, write down the keywords mentioned in the vacancy. You need to know what jobs are out there. Another good website

is [greenjobs.nl](https://www.greenjobs.nl) because it filters jobs that are not related to sustainability. Hence, the number of jobs will not be too overwhelming.

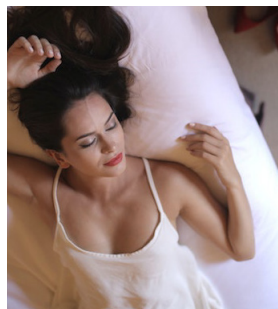
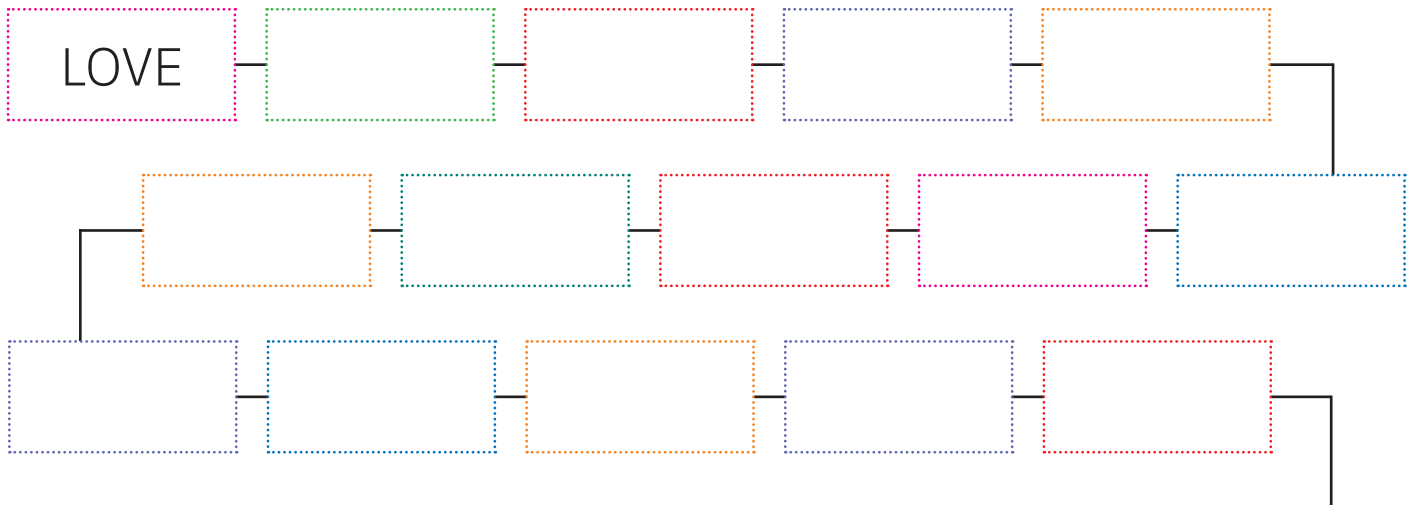
For yourself, think about what you are interested in and what are your capabilities. I can tell you that I had no idea that I would end up at AbelTalent. I did not know where I would be in five years. I have always wanted to be a project leader in 5 years.

Anything changes in your plan, but in the end, you will be there.

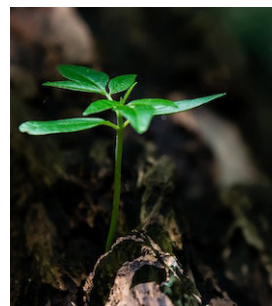
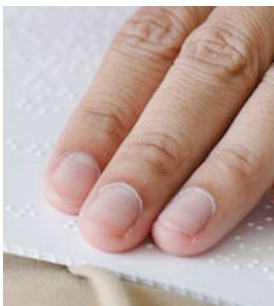
My boss always tells me that when you work, you need to sit back for a moment and think: 1) what are you doing; 2) do you like it 3) are you a specialist, or are you a generalist? As a generalist, I call many of my connections that work in different places to understand what jobs I prefer. 🌐

SO YOU WANT TO **PUZZLE** HUH?

text NIAMH BOSCH



GROW



SNAKY PUZZLE

It's finally time for that puzzle again! In this "wordsnake", try to find the words in the boxes above. Going to the next box, only 1 letter may be changed, the order of the letters can be adjusted. Each word corresponds to one of the pictures on this page.

Good luck smartiepants!

